NOTES for RWM and JMH for ICOSI Executive Committee Meeting, Amsterdam, February 5/6, 1979

VOLUNTARY INDUSTRY CODES OF BEHAVIOUR / CONDUCT / ETHICS

A) VARIABLES

1. Nature and source of attacks prior to formulation of code.
2. Who will be / is / was involved in formulation of code ? (Industry ? Consumers ? Critics ? Government ? Professions ?)
3. Extent of code likely to be agreed within industry compared with extent of code that would meet objectives/wishes of critics/governments, etc.
4. Whether or not acceptance of code is pre-condition of memberhsip of industry body.
5. Enforcement/sanctions/expulsion of members accompanying code. CREDIBILITY.
6. Extent to which code will be/can be externally publicised.
7. Is code intended to ward off legislation or form basis of legislation ?

B) PROS

- Code will be a minimum standard : RAISE STANDARD OF CONDUCT / ISOLATE NON-COMPLIERS
- Spirit of voluntary code more likely to be adhered to than legislation
- Ward off legislation
- Form basis for future legislation
- Focus criticism on non-compliance
- Opportunity to involve certain critics, professions, government in formulation of code (DEFUSE)
- Generally better if attacks are on marketing rather than product itself

C) CONS

- Code will be a minimum standard : LIKELY TO BE WISHY-WASHY
- What sanctions / disincentives for non-compliance
- Speed up legislation, by demonstrating that industry cannot voluntarily agree to a "high enough" standard
- Form MINIMUM basis for future legislation
- Give one more basis for criticism
- Invite campaigns from others for stricter codes
- Danger of violation of anti-trust regulation if code concerns marketing

Attached : Milk-powder voluntary code (N.B. date of code, compared with recentness of major attacks on certain members of that industry).

February 2, 1979/AAN/amr

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Source: https://www.industrydocuments.ucsf.edu/docs/xlgk0000